

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 16 and 18-21 are pending in the application, with Claim 16 being the only independent claim.

Claim 17 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 16 and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Applicant submitted replacement drawings with the Amendment of February 9, 2004. Further, a substitute specification was filed on February 18, 2004. The specification included amendments corresponding to changes incorporated in the replacement drawings.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner indicate consideration of the February 9, 2004 replacement drawings in the next official communication.


Applicant notes that Claims 17-21 are considered to contain allowable subject matter.

Independent Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,844,658 ("Kishida"). Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Applicant has herein incorporated the features of allowable Claim 17 into Claim 16. Accordingly, Claim 16 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection are respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the application at the Examiner's earliest convenience are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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